

Summary of Good Sleep Rules

I. Sleep strategy

1. Curtail and regularize bedtime. Get up at the same time each day. Do not oversleep.
2. Should you wake up at night, try to stay in bed, relaxed. Let yourself fall asleep again. However, if you feel yourself becoming tense and frustrated, do something else, such as reading. Avoid back-lit screens. You could get up to do a quiet activity for a half hour, then follow the bedtime rules.
3. NO matter, how poor the night, have an alarm clock awaken you at regular, predetermined time. Never oversleep because of a poor night. Your body clock must know the length of a day, which is the interval between your morning arising times on Sunday, Monday, etc. This is how to tune your body's clock to the way the world goes around, which is once per 24 hours.
4. Explore afternoon naps: Take them if they help you sleep, avoid them, no matter how tempting, if they disrupt sleep that night. Arousal levels cycle, so if you stay awake for a while, the sleepiness may go away.
5. Exercise regularly during the day up to the late afternoon or early evening. Avoid strenuous physical activity in the late evening. Keep yourself fit (even if tired from insomnia); healthy bodies promote good sleep.
6. Develop bedtime rituals. These serve as reminders that it is time for sleep. For instance, you lock your doors, brush your teeth, change into your sleepwear, get in bed, and turn off the lights. An extremely hot bath one to two hours before bedtime may ease sleep onset. A snack before bedtime is beneficial. Reading in bed may hasten sleep onset.
7. Do not label yourself as an insomniac. A fear of insomnia can become a self-fulfilling prophecy. Everyone has a difficult night now and then.
8. If worrying keeps you awake, set up a 30 minute 'worry period' to occur at the same time and place each day, not too close to bedtime, such as after your evening meal.

9. Consult your doctor if you have any symptoms, like cough, itch, or toothache, which may interfere with your sleep.